

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests further examination and reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the arguments set forth below. Claims 1-29 were previously pending in this application. Within the Office Action, Claims 1, 17 and 22 have been rejected and Claims 2-16, 18-21 and 23-29 have been objected to. By the above amendment, Claims 2-11, 15-17 and 22 have been amended and Claims 1, 18 and 23 have been canceled. Accordingly, Claims 2-17, 19-22 and 24-29 are currently pending.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Within the Office Action, Claims 1, 17 and 22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,889,919 to Inoue et al. ("Inoue").

Within the Office Action, Claims 2-16, 18-21 and 23-29 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. It is stated within the Office Action that Claims 2-16, 18-21 and 23-29 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By the above amendment, the objected to Claims 2-4 have been amended into independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, as indicated within the Office Action, the independent Claims 2-4 are allowable.

By the above amendment, the objected to Claim 11 has been amended into independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, as indicated within the Office Action, the independent Claim 11 is allowable.

Claims 5-10, 15 and 16 are all dependent on the independent Claim 11. Since the independent Claim 11 is allowable, Claims 5-10, 15 and 16 are all also allowable as being dependent on an allowable base claim.

By the above amendment, Claims 12-14 have been canceled.

By the above amendment, the independent Claim 17 has been amended to include the limitations from the objected to Claim 18. Accordingly, as indicated within the Office Action, the independent Claim 17 is allowable.

Claims 19-21 are all dependent on the independent Claim 17. Since the independent Claim 17 is allowable, Claims 19-21 are all also allowable as being dependent on an allowable base claim.

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By the above amendment, the independent Claim 22 has been amended to include the limitations from the objected to Claim 23. Accordingly, as indicated within the Office Action, the independent Claim 22 is allowable.

Claims 24-29 are all dependent on the independent Claim 22. Since the independent Claim 22 is allowable, Claims 24-29 are all also allowable as being dependent on an allowable base claim.

For the reasons given above, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the pending claims are now in condition for allowance, and allowance at an early date would be greatly appreciated. If the Examiner should have any questions or comments, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned at (408) 530-9700 to discuss the same so that any outstanding issues can be expeditiously resolved.

Respectfully submitted,
HAVERSTOCK & OWENS LLP

Dated: March 6, 2006

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING (37 CFR§ 1.8(a))

I hereby certify that this paper (along with any referred to as being attached or enclosed) is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service on the date shown below with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to the: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

HAVERSTOCK & OWENS LLP.

Date: 3/6/06 By: Jonathan O. Owens